

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 08750 211419Z

65

ACTION NEA-10

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R 210955Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7269

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL PESHAWAR

UNCLAS ISLAMABAD 8750

E.O. 1652: N/A

TAGS: PK, PFOR, AF

SUBJ: PAKISTAN PRESS REACTION TO ARRIVAL OF AFGHAN PRESIDENT

1. SUMMARY: PAKISTAN HAS GONE ALL-OUT TO ACCORD AFGHAN PRESIDENT MOHAMMAD DAOUD A WARM WELCOME AT THE ONSET OF HIS FOUR-DAY OFFICIAL VISIT THAT WILL INCLUDE TALKS WITH PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO AS THE TWO LEADERS CAUTIOUSLY THREAD THEIR WAY TOWARD FURTHER NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS. THE ATMOSPHERE IS EXTREMELY CONDUCIVE FOR SUCCESSFUL TALKS, YET THE GOP AND MEDIA RECOGNIZE THE GREAT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEORETICALLY DECIDING TO IMPROVE RELATIONS AND ACTUALLY SOLVING CONCRETE DIFFERENCES. END SUMMARY.

2. PRESIDENT DAOUD OF AFGHANISTAN ARRIVED AUGUST 20 WITH PAK AIRFORCE ESCORT AND 21-GUN SALUTE TO A WELL-STAGED, WARM OFFICIAL RECEPTION. IN ADDITION TO THE OFFICIAL CEREMONIES AT THE AIRPORT AND THRONGS OF WELL-WISHERS WHO LINED THE STREETS, SCORES OF PATHAN TRIBESMEN

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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 08750 211419Z

CAME TO RAWALPINDI TO LITERALLY DANCE IN THE STREETS,

ALONG THE PROCESSIONAL ROUTE. THIS SPONTANEOUS DISPLAY WAS A NATURAL SIDELIGHT TO THE GOP'S DETERMINATION TO MATCH AFGHAN HOSPITALITY ACCORDED TO BHUTTO DURING HIS VISIT TO KABUL FOR THE FIRST ROUND OF THE DAOUD-BHUTTO TALKS.

3. THE OFFICIAL GREETINGS, TOASTS, AND PRELIMINARY SPEECHES BY BOTH LEADERS, WHICH APPEARED IN THE PRESS, STRESSED THE "BROTHERLY" TIES BETWEEN THE AFGHAN AND PAKISTANI PEOPLES AND EXPRESSED HOPES FOR "PEACE, UNDERSTANDING AND FRATERNAL FELLOWSHIP" BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

4. IN A FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL THE AUGUST 21 PAKISTAN TIMES LAMENTED THE "UNFORTUNATE DECADES OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND PERIODS OF ACTIVE HOSTILITY" THAT MARKED THE PAST AND STAND AS THE MAJOR OBSTACLE TO ACHIEVING BETTER RELATIONS. HOWEVER, THE SPIRIT OF THE KABUL SUMMIT-- UNDER FRAMEWORK OF THE FIVE PRINCIPLES OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE THAT THE LEADERS AGREED ON -- STANDS AS A "MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH" THAT THE PRESS HOPES WILL UNCLOG THE INCUBUS OF DISAFFECTION THAT HAS SEPARATED THE TWO NATIONS IN THE PAST. THOUGH PROGRESS WILL REQUIRE CONCRETE POLICIES RATHER THAN THEORETICAL DECISIONS, THE EDITORIAL NOTES THAT THERE HAVE BEEN RECENT GESTURES OF GOODWILL BY BOTH COUNTRIES: BOTH HAVE REFRAINED FROM INTERFERING IN ONE ANOTHER'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS; HOSTILE PROPAGANDA HAS CEASED; AND AFGHANISTAN, IN A MOVE THAT RECEIVED WIDESPREAD AND FAVORABLE COVERAGE IN THE PAKISTANI PRESS, RECENTLY DONATED DOLLARS 50,000 TOWARD PAKISTAN'S FLOOD RELIEF EFFORTS.
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